

United States District Court, Northern District of Illinois

Name of Assigned Judge or Magistrate Judge	SHARON JOHNSON COLEMAN	Sitting Judge if Other than Assigned Judge	
CASE NUMBER	11 C 4364	DATE	July 13, 2011
CASE TITLE	Timothy L. Phillips (#2010-0405069) vs. Officer Stokes, et al.		

DOCKET ENTRY TEXT:

The plaintiff's motion for leave to proceed *in forma pauperis* [#3] is granted. The court authorizes and orders Cook County Jail officials to begin making monthly deductions in accordance with this order. The clerk shall send a copy of this order to the Supervisor of Inmate Trust Fund Accounts, Cook County Dept. of Corrections Administrative Office, Division V, 2700 S. California, Chicago, Illinois 60608. The clerk is directed to issue summonses for service on the defendants by the U.S. Marshal. The clerk is also directed to send the plaintiff a magistrate judge consent form and filing instructions along with a copy of this order. The plaintiff's motion for appointment of counsel [#4] is denied, without prejudice.

■ [For further details see text below.]

Docketing to mail notices.

STATEMENT

The plaintiff, an inmate in the custody of the Cook County Department of Corrections, has brought this *pro se* civil rights action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The plaintiff claims that the defendants, correctional officials, violated the plaintiff's constitutional rights by acting with deliberate indifference to his medical needs. More specifically, the plaintiff alleges that a correctional officer at the jail needlessly delayed medical care for eight hours after the plaintiff broke his leg; he further alleges that during his six-month recovery, he was housed in a unit that was not wheelchair accessible.

The plaintiff's motion for leave to proceed *in forma pauperis* is granted. Because the plaintiff has a zero balance in his inmate trust account and no deposits for the past six months, the initial partial filing fee is waived pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(4). However, the supervisor of inmate trust accounts at the Cook County Jail is authorized and ordered to begin collecting monthly payments from the plaintiff's trust fund account in an amount equal to 20% of the preceding month's income credited to the account. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2). Monthly payments collected from the plaintiff's trust fund account shall be forwarded to the Clerk of Court each time the amount in the account exceeds \$10 until the full \$350 filing fee is paid. *Id.* All payments shall be sent

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STATEMENT (continued)

to the Clerk, United States District Court, 219 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Illinois 60604, attn: Cashier's Desk, 20th Floor, and shall clearly identify the plaintiff's name and the case number assigned to this action. The Cook County inmate trust account office shall notify transferee authorities of any outstanding balance in the event the plaintiff is transferred from the jail to another correctional facility.

Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court is required to conduct a prompt initial review of prisoner complaints against governmental entities or employees. Here, accepting the plaintiff's factual allegations as true, the court finds that the complaint states a colorable cause of action under the Civil Rights Act. The Due Process Clause prohibits deliberate indifference to the serious medical needs of a pretrial detainee. *Grieverson v. Anderson*, 538 F.3d 763, 779 (7th Cir. 2008); *Chapman v. Keltner*, 241 F. 3d 842, 845 (7th Cir. 2001); *but see Henderson v. Sheahan*, 196 F.3d 839, 844 (7th Cir. 1999) (inattention only to serious injury or signs of serious injury amounts to a constitutional violation). The plaintiff may also have a claim under the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, *et seq.* While a more fully developed record may belie the plaintiff's claims, the defendants must respond to the allegations in the complaint.

The clerk shall issue summonses for service of the complaint on the defendants. The clerk shall also send the plaintiff a Magistrate Judge Consent Form and Instructions for Submitting Documents along with a copy of this order.

The United States Marshals Service is appointed to serve the defendants. Any service forms necessary for the plaintiff to complete will be sent by the Marshal as appropriate to serve the defendants with process. The U.S. Marshal is directed to make all reasonable efforts to serve the defendants. If either defendant can no longer be found at the work address provided by the plaintiff, the Cook County Department of Corrections shall furnish the Marshal with the defendant's last-known address. The information shall be used only for purposes of effectuating service [or for proof of service, should a dispute arise] and any documentation of the address shall be retained only by the Marshal. Address information shall not be maintained in the court file, nor disclosed by the Marshal. The Marshal is authorized to mail a request for waiver of service to the defendants in the manner prescribed by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(d)(2) before attempting personal service.

The plaintiff is instructed to file all future papers concerning this action with the Clerk of Court in care of the Prisoner Correspondent. The plaintiff must provide the court with the original plus a complete judge's copy, including any exhibits, of every document filed. In addition, the plaintiff must send an exact copy of any court filing to the defendants [or to defense counsel, once an attorney has entered an appearance on behalf of the defendants]. Every document filed with the court must include a certificate of service stating to whom exact copies were mailed and the date of mailing. Any paper that is sent directly to the judge or that otherwise fails to comply with these instructions may be disregarded by the court or returned to the plaintiff.

Finally, the plaintiff's motion for appointment of counsel is denied. There is no constitutional or statutory right to counsel in federal civil cases. *Romanelli v. Suliene*, 615 F.3d 847, 851 (2010); *see also Johnson v.*
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STATEMENT (continued)

Doughty, 433 F.3d 1001, 1006 (7th Cir. 2006). Nevertheless, the district court has discretion under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(1) to request counsel for an indigent litigant. *Pruitt v. Mote*, 503 F.3d 647, 654 (7th Cir. 2007), *citing Johnson*, 433 F.3d at 1006. When a *pro se* litigant submits a request for appointment of counsel, the court must first consider whether the indigent plaintiff has made reasonable attempts to secure counsel on his own, or conversely, if he has been precluded from doing so. *Pruitt*, 503 F.3d at 654. Next, the court must evaluate the complexity of the case and whether the plaintiff appears competent to litigate it on his own. *Id.* at 654-55. Another consideration is whether the assistance of counsel would provide a substantial benefit to the court or the parties, potentially affecting the outcome of the case. *Id.* at 654; *Gil v. Reed*, 381 F.3d 649, 656 (7th Cir. 2004); *see also* Local Rule 83.36(c) (N.D. Ill.) (listing the factors to be taken into account in determining whether to appoint counsel).

After considering the above factors, the court concludes that appointment of counsel is not warranted in this case. Although the complaint sets forth cognizable claims, the plaintiff has alleged no physical or mental disability that might preclude him from adequately investigating the facts giving rise to his complaint. Neither the legal issues raised in the complaint nor the evidence that might support the plaintiff's claims are so complex or intricate that a trained attorney is necessary. The plaintiff, whose initial submissions are coherent and articulate, appears more than capable of presenting his case. It should additionally be noted that the court grants *pro se* litigants wide latitude in the handling of their lawsuits. Therefore, the plaintiff's motion for appointment of counsel is denied at this time. Should the case proceed to a point that assistance of counsel is appropriate, the court may revisit this request.